

Trustee Hopeful Schwenke Wants Voters To Have Choice

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is the third article in which the Courier and Freeman takes a look at candidates for village trustee. There are four people running for two trustee positions this year. In an upcoming issue, we will talk with the fourth candidate.

BY BETSY BAKER
Political newcomer Ray Schwenke says that his "prime reason" for seeking a seat on the Potsdam Village Board of Trustees is to "give the voters a choice."

Schwenke, a Republican, says that if all the board members are of one party, there is an "inherent danger" that those board members will be "speaking only one view, particularly when there is a strong mayor."

Schwenke's campaign, his first for public office, is not a negative one, he says, and is "not directed against any person." But he believes that "it's wrong in any village not to have some choice."

This is the first time in 20 years, according to Schwenke, that all the members of the village board have been of the same party. Presently all the members of the Potsdam Village Board,

as well as the mayor, are Democrats. "The most important issue of this campaign is to give the voters a choice—and I would say the same thing if it was an all-Republican board," Schwenke says.

Schwenke feels that he would have "plenty of time" to devote to the trustee's post. He plans to take an early retirement on Sept. 1 from his present post as Director of Facilities and Budgets, Student Life Division of Clarkson College.

Schwenke also says he has many questions, particularly fiscal questions, about existing procedures and programs in the village.

For example, Schwenke says he has questions about the use of federal monies in the village.

I understand from talking to Jack Hayes (formerly Mayor of Potsdam) that during his administration the operation of the village was paid for with village revenues," Schwenke said.

Projects were paid for with federal funds, according to Schwenke. "Maybe that's still true. I don't know," he continued. "Are they using federal anti-inflation funds for Village

operations?"
The use of federal funds should be confined to projects, Schwenke believes. That way, if the money is no longer available, projects could be delayed if necessary, but people and their jobs would not be directly involved.

Schwenke also says there is "not very much publicity about Village finances." "Are we fiscally sound? Is the budget in the red? I don't know," he said.

The village should also have a better way of letting the public know about its day-to-day activities, according to Schwenke. He suggested that the village publish information on upcoming meeting items and provide a weekly summary of its daily activities.

"I feel there is a lack of positive effort to inform people of what's happening," Schwenke said. "There are many unknown things."

Schwenke also feels that some procedures in the village could be improved, such as management of snow removal.

"It used to be better," he said. "It appears that we do have the necessary good manpower and equipment but that its operational employment leaves

much to be desired."
Some improvement in the snow removal picture might occur if the village purchased a new snow blower to replace one that has been sidelined, Schwenke suggested.

Issues such as the Depot Restaurant, the Potsdam Relief Route and Urban Renewal parcel 3 "are not campaign issues for me," Schwenke says.

Of the Depot, Schwenke says, "I think the Depot has to go. The need for the Relief Route is so vital."

Schwenke feels that a motel should be built on Urban Renewal parcel 3. He noted Clarkson president Robert Plane's support of the need for a motel, and said that Clarkson could make use of such a facility.

"Every effort should be made to attract a name motel to that parcel," Schwenke said.

That effort should be "aggressive," according to Schwenke. "We're just sort of sitting back waiting for something to happen," he noted.



RAY SCHWENKE

At present preferred developer status for parcel 3 has been granted to Globe Enterprises, Inc., which plans to construct a Holiday Inn on the parcel.

Schwenke has been employed at Clarkson College since 1966. In addition, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps for 28 years, retiring as a colonel in 1964. Presently Schwenke is a sales associate with the Arlene W. Correll Realty World firm in Potsdam in addition to his duties at Clarkson.

He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in political science, and has completed studies in economics and industry at the Industrial College, National Defense University.

Schwenke's wife Virginia is a teacher at Potsdam Central High school. The couple lives at 4 Circle Drive; they have five children, Roger, an attorney; George, a Navy lieutenant; Stephen, an architect; Kenneth, a Marine Corps lieutenant and Barbara, a freshman at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va.

Republican Trustee Candidates Issue Position Statement

Potsdam's two Republican candidates for village trustee have issued a statement that outlines their concerns for the upcoming village election. The two candidates are Ray Schwenke and Eleanor Senf. Opposing them are Democrats Paul Claffey and John Chapple, both incumbents. There will be two seats open on the village board in the March election.

The Republican statement follows:

Checks And Balances
"The American system of government is predicated on a system of checks and balances. In Potsdam, in the last two years, our Village government has been in the control of a single political party. This is an unusual situation for our

small community. In the past, when voter confidence in its leadership maintained a Republican majority on the Board of Trustees and in the Office of Mayor, opportunity was always advanced to appoint Democratic partisans to seats which had become vacant. This was done in order to maintain the essential balance and perspective of truly representative government.

"The present Democratic administration has sought to maintain itself in power by appointing like-minded Democrats to vacancies on the Board. This has given Potsdam a government by clique rather than representation. It has given Potsdam a

decision making process which reflects narrow and predetermined points of view. This general unwillingness to even consider opposing perspectives has resulted in waste, inefficiency and mismanagement on all levels of Village government. It has also led to a burgeoning mini-bureaucracy as village government is expanded to consolidate the power of the incumbents.

Water
"Water, water everywhere—but not a drop that is fit to drink... Long time residents as well as visitors to our Village agree that our drinking water might not give you dysentery but it sure makes a bitter cup of coffee or tea. Why should we have to carry water from the

Sisson Street Spring to brew decent coffee or tea?"

The present Administration has supposedly been working since 1975 to bring residents drinkable water. It is 1979 and we are still waiting! Similarly, our inadequate storm and sanitary sewer systems continue to vex property owners. In some instances, even, they still remain to be built. A flood basement is not emptied of unhealthy sewage nor are higher homeowner insurance premiums paid by idle promises to "look into the matter."

Career Development Program
"Potsdam Village Employees should not be pushed around like pawns on a political chessboard. Potsdam should

have a career development program for such political appointees as the Village Administrator, the Chief of Police, the Superintendent of Public Works and such other positions as may be appropriate.

"Persons who work for the village should be secure in their jobs. They should be able to execute their professional responsibilities and duties unhindered by fear of losing their employment for 'political' reasons. Village employees should have a right to know what is expected of them.

Fiscal Responsibility
"Fiscal Responsibility means that our elected Village officials should always bear in mind that the money they spend

represents your tax dollars. Robbing Peter to pay Paul as when monies are transferred from fund to fund to cover operating deficits is not the best example of fiscal responsibility. Continuous reliance on federal grant money for funding capital projects of questionable benefit to the village, is not evidence of sound fiscal management. Destroying small taxpaying businesses to create a marginally better business climate by building a road where a bridge would suffice, does not indicate even a rudimentary knowledge of economics.

"Fiscal responsibility is more than a phrase. Fiscal responsibility is an attitude and a principle. It is best exercised by those who have to work with it every day on a first hand basis."

Board Approves \$15,000 For Fire Training Center

CANTON — Construction is expected to begin this spring on the county's fire training site, as the legislature unanimously approved a \$15,000 allocation to the St. Lawrence County Fire Chief's Association.

The center is to be located on Canton ATC property, for which the county already holds a lease. Plans to build the center there were made a number of years ago, but were never implemented.

Patrick VerSchneider, county fire coordinator, told the board that it will cost about \$5,000 to construct a road (two-tenths of a mile long) to the center, if the county highway department is able to do the work. Otherwise, it would cost more, the fire coordinator said.

Of the remaining \$10,000, \$7,000 would

be spent to construct the fire training tower, with \$2,000 for oil pits, and \$1,000 for a fence.

The fire chiefs intend, VerSchneider commented, to build only the "essential items," such as the fire tower and pits, in the first year.

The association had preferred to build the center at the county home property, but the public safety committee recently chose the ATC site.

In other action Monday night the board approved the immediate hiring of six CETA participants as fulltime employees at the county jail, at grade 10, step one. By June of 1980, the county will need to hire another five CETA enrollees, as their terms with Employment and Training expire.

The county has been mandated by the state to increase its jail personnel, a requirement which the legislature temporarily bypassed through the CETA contract. But the CETA program is expiring, and cannot be renewed, a fact of life which the legislature anticipated, and set aside monies in the contingency account.

In other action, the board: Voted to amend the budget to allow receipt of \$27,000 for implementation of a Prosecutor's Management Information System in the district attorney's office. The board had previously delayed action on the proposal, due to concern that the county might have to pick up part of the cost of the system, after the grant expires. But

the district attorney recently told legislators that the county has the option of implementing recommendations, but is not required to do so.

Adopted a resolution recommending that the state legislature pass a measure allowing residents of the Adirondack Park to gather dead wood and timber lying on the forest floor when the commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation determines that removal is in the interests of life, safety, and fire prevention.

Tabled consideration of a resolution to dispense with verbatim minutes of legislative meetings, since a tape recorder is used for records. Ogdensburg legislator Allen Rische recommended that the legislative and judicial

Country Children's Clinic, for \$12,000; with Planned Parenthood, for \$15,000; with Central New York Health Systems Agency, for \$17,430; and with Federated Sportsman's Clubs, for \$1,200.

Agreed with the mental health board's recommendation to designate REACHOUT, a crisis intervention hotline, to replace Helping Hand, as the agency to receive funds.

Appointed Beverly Dalton to the position of director of patient services-supervisor of public health nurses.

Tabled consideration of a resolution to dispense with verbatim minutes of legislative meetings, since a tape recorder is used for records. Ogdensburg legislator Allen Rische recommended that the legislative and judicial

committee study a similar, but more detailed resolution introduced to the board in 1977.

FLOWERS
ORGAS, W. Va. (AP) — Flowers that never wilt decorate some 250 markers at Pineview Cemetery.

They are plastic and some cost as much as \$100. They are changed three or four times a year in spring, pines and red carnations in autumn, poinsettias in winter.

"I'm not sure how it all started," says a caretaker who has been with the cemetery for the past 17 years. "It's been going on for as long as I can remember. It's the way families here choose to honor their dead."



FT. TICONDEROGA—Winner of the fraternity award for ice sculpture at this year's Ice Carnival was Delta Upsilon, 30 Elm St., for its recreation of Ft. Ticonderoga. Inside the fort is a guard house with table, chair and stone fireplace, and a well with bucket, all sculpted out of ice. Other winners were

Agonian sorority, 11 Pierrepont Ave. for a statue honoring the New York Yankees, and the "ghetto rats" of Round Hill Road, for a statue depicting the Statue of Liberty. (Betsy Baker photo)



EAGLE SCOUTS—Two Potsdam youths attained the rank of Eagle Scout at ceremonies held Feb. 9 in the Presbyterian Center. Receiving Scouting's highest award were Dean Bautz and Michael G. Branden. Shown from left are Mr. and Mrs.

Conrad Bautz, their son Dean, Michael Branden, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Marshall. Also shown are Scoutmaster Joseph Biegen and Assemblyman David O'B. Martin, who assisted in the ceremony. (Betsy Baker photo).

Officials See Athletic Field Drainage Plans

BY BY NEIL THOMPSON
PARISHVILLE—The Parishville-Hopkinton School District has a problem.

When students want to use the high school athletic field, they often find it muddy and wet, making it unsuitable for use.

The matter was discussed at last night's school board meeting.

Doug Burdick, district conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in St. Lawrence County, attended the meeting and handed out preliminary plans he thinks will solve the problem.

No decision was reached, but board members did get a better idea of what their options are, and how much money would be involved.

Burdick outlined the different alternatives.

"You could buy the Cadillac or buy the cheaper model, depending on how far you want to go," he said.

One possibility—the most comprehensive and expensive—would be to build sub-surface and surface drainage into the baseball field, soccer field and playfield. Also, top soil would be added to the three fields.

The price tag for all this, Burdick said, would be about \$34,000.

Without the top soil, he said, the figure could be slashed to about \$17,000.

Other alternatives would be to confine drainage to sub-surface or surface drainage. Also, the board could correct drainage problems on only one or two of the fields, thereby reducing costs.

In other matters, the board spent considerable time in executive session, discussing handicapped students and handicapped committee reports.

The first executive session lasted from 8:17 p.m. to 9:20 p.m. The second

ran from 10:50 p.m. to 11:17 p.m. No decisions on the handicapped were made in open session.

The board also made several appointments, including the following:

— Clarence Woodward, outdoor education teacher.

— Rachael Straight, math aide.

— Mary Beth Bullard, reading aide.

— Dianne Puchlerz, first grade teacher.

The board appointed Mr. and Mrs. Evan Harper and Mr. and Mrs. Robert

Phippen as chaperones for the senior class trip. The seniors will fly to Orlando, Fla., in March.

In other matters, the board:

— Agreed to hold the annual district meeting at 7:30 p.m. June 5 at the high school auditorium.

— Appointed Jan Webber as substitute bus driver.

— Passed a motion to throw out all job applications within two years after they are submitted.

Village Officials Chide Demarest's Motel Comments

BY BETSY BAKER
Potsdam Village officials have called for a "public statement" from the St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency concerning comments made by an IDA member at a political gathering last week.

In a letter dated Feb. 8, and sent to IDA chairman Ernie LaBaff, Mayor Ruth Garner and Trustee Norma Thayer asked the IDA to "disavow" statements made by Potsdam attorney David Demarest, an IDA member, at a meeting called by the local Republican candidates for village trustee.

That meeting which was called to discuss the future of Urban Renewal parcel 3 (the motel parcel), was attended by about ten downtown business people, the candidates, Demarest, county economic developer William Cook and one or two others. Two reporters were also present at the meeting.

Demarest, who spoke at some length at the meeting, was quoted in two newspapers as saying that Globe Enterprises, Inc., presently preferred developers for the parcel, might be unable to find buyers for the some \$2 million in tax exempt bonds that would be sold through the IDA to finance the project. The developers may be seeking more conventional financing for the project, according to Demarest.

"Personally I think they (the developers) will pull out," Demarest stated.

He also suggested changing the motel designation of the parcel to include a shopping center or a collection of small shops, and he stated, "If this Holiday Inn falls through, they'll never build a

motel on this site."
Cook, who was questioned on the status of the Holiday Inn project at last week's meeting, declined to comment, saying that he was present at the meeting "as a resident and a registered Republican."

In the letter sent to LaBaff, Garner and Thayer state that they are "distressed...that a member of the IDA has now put one of our most important Village projects on a political basis."

"A public statement by your Agency may not remove the skepticism in the community about the viability of the motel project," the letter continues, "but we do hope that you will disavow the statements made by Mr. Demarest, and firmly state that he was not speaking for the IDA."

LaBaff, contacted by the Courier and Freeman Monday, stated that "Mr. Demarest's remarks are entirely his own, and do not reflect the position of the IDA."

LaBaff went on to say that as chairman of the IDA he wished to make a "personal observation" about the matter.

"I know there will be times when IDA members make statements of one kind or another," LaBaff said. "I hope in the future all Agency members will consider carefully before they make statements on any projects the IDA is involved in."

"As long as I've been chairman of the IDA I've carefully left politics out of it," LaBaff concluded.

LaBaff said that he has spoken to Mayor Garner, telling her "essentially what I told you."